

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are currently pending, with claim 1 being independent. Claims 1, 11, 12 and 15 have been amended. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the process control computer is arranged in a non-Ex ("non-explosion proof") area and that the data transmission device and the field units are arranged in an Ex ("explosion-proof") area, as shown in Fig. 2. In addition, claims 1, 11, 12 and 15 have been amended to correct minor errors. No new matter has been introduced.

Claims 1, 11, 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection in view of the amendments to claims 1, 11, 12 and 15, which are believed to address all of the Examiner's concerns.

Claims 1-10, 12 and 13 have been rejected as being anticipated by Burkhard (U.S. Patent No. 6,574,652). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because Burkhard does not describe or suggest arranging a barrier device that limits applied power in an Ex area, with the barrier device being located in a field unit or a data distributing device of a data transmission device, as recited in claim 1. Instead, as shown in Fig. 1 of Burkhard, only the satellite boxes 18-20 are arranged with the driller's monitor 16 and the alarm horn 22 in the hazardous (Ex) area 2. As shown by Fig. 1 of Burkhard, the barrier box 14 of Burkhard, which provides the functions of the barrier device, is arranged in the non-hazardous (non-Ex) area. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 11 has been rejected as being unpatentable over Burkhard in view of Selli (U.S. Patent No. 6,885,949). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because Selli, which is cited as showing the use of Profibus, does not remedy the failure of Burkhard to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

Claims 14-16 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Burkhard in view of Ketler (U.S. Patent No. 6,169,488). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because Ketler, which is cited as showing connection and interactions between the process

control computer to a server, does not remedy the failure of Burkhard to describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

Applicants submit that all claims are in condition for allowance.

The fee in the amount of \$120 in payment of the one-month extension fee is being paid concurrently herewith on the Electronic Filing System (EFS) by way of Deposit Account authorization. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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